

THE tribal CONNECTION

Inside this Issue

Twenty-three Mile Creek **P2**

2011 Environmental Quality Incentives
Program (EQIP) Allocations **P2**

Makah Indian Reservation Soil Survey **P3**

Tribal Advisory Council
Meeting at Northern Quest **P4**

Welcome from Roylene

Washington State Conservationist Roylene Rides at the Door would like to kick off the first edition of *The Tribal Connection* with a special message to readers.

As part of implementing a tribal program in the state, I am writing to introduce you to two new state Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Tribal Liaisons, Rebecca Toupal for our East/Central Area and Robin Slate for our West Area. Our current Tribal Liaison, Shiraz Vira, will be retiring June 3, 2011.

Both Tribal Liaisons' mission is to develop a Government-to-Government relationship with the 29 Tribes in Washington and Historic jurisdiction tribes in Oregon and Idaho. Rebecca and Robin will share the responsibility for coordinating the newly formed Washington NRCS Tribal Advisory Council in conjunction with the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians and will be working with Tribes to develop consultation agreements. We are asking for a representative from each Tribe to serve on the Washington Tribal Advisory Council. The first meeting of the Council will be held April 18, 2011 at Northern Quest Casino from 9:30 to 2:30. We will be discussing NRCS program information.

Rebecca will work with the Tribes East of the Cascade Range while Robin will work with



State Conservationist, Roylene Rides at the Door

Tribes West of the Cascade Range. Both will provide technical assistance related to integrating traditional ecological knowledge and indigenous practices as desired by the tribes.

Rebecca Toupal is experienced in conservation planning as well as in ethnographic research with Native Americans. Her education includes range management, landscape architecture, and natural resource management with a cultural anthropology minor. She has worked with over 50 Tribes across the country and in Canada on natural and cultural resource assessment projects for several federal agencies.

continued on page 4

Important Dates to Remember

April 18, 2011
Washington Tribal
Advisory Council Meeting

April 26, 2011
CIG National Component
deadline for pre-proposals

June 30, 2011
CIG WA State Component
deadline for proposals

August 13, 2011
Fiscal Year 2011 cut-off
date for applications



Twenty-three Mile Creek

High up in the forest of the Sanpoil River drainage of Colville Indian Reservation, near Republic, WA, is a fishery in need of rehabilitation.

“The conservation practices included in the plan for Twenty-three mile creek will greatly improve conditions in meadows, along stream banks, and consequently, in the creek itself.”

*—Patrice Beckwith
District Conservationist
Republic, WA*

FAST FACT: 2011 EQIP Allocation

A total of \$1,495,821 was awarded on Tribal Lands in Washington State in FY 2011 on 22 contracts through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Yakama Nation

9 contracts totalling \$598,748
(range, cropland & forestry projects)

Colville Tribe

12 contracts totalling \$744,965
(range, cropland & forestry projects)

Quinault Nation

1 contract totalling \$152,108



The Colville Tribe’s Fish and Wildlife Department, through stocking surveys, identified Twenty-Three Mile Creek as an important native fishery with genetically unique populations of Columbia River red-band trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss gairdneri*), a traditional food of the San Poil people. The riparian zone along the creek attracts deer, elk, and other large mammals as well as game birds, migratory birds, amphibians, and reptiles. Meadows associated with the creek have been an important cultural place for generations, and are used today as hunting and gathering camps, meeting places, and ceremonial sites. Cattle-ranching is another traditional use of the area; however, the herds have contributed to soil and invasive weed problems.

Past grazing strategies on the Colville Reservation lacked such features as rotation, cross-fences, exclusion fences, and off-site watering facilities. The competition between cattle and wildlife has led to soil compaction, erosion, unstable creek banks, elimination of woody vegetation in the riparian zone, and water



Top: Stream bank condition after re-vegetation and exclusion fencing (background). Bottom: Stream bank conditions before conservation practices.

quality problems. These impacts have contributed to reductions in habitat, and increases in water temperatures. Such conditions put the red-band trout at risk since their ideal habitat is clean, cool, relatively small, and low gradient streams. Red-band trout can exceed 10 inches (25 cm) at maturity, which they reach within in 3 years, if they have the proper habitat.

To address these resource concerns, the Fish and Wildlife Department, with unanimous support from the Tribal Business Council, pursued funding through the Natural Resource Conservation Service’s

Continued on page 4

Makah Indian Reservation Soil Survey



The Makah Indian Reservation, home of the Makah people, occupies the most northwestern point in the contiguous United States, and is one of the most beautiful and unique natural areas in Washington.

Neah Bay is bordered to the west by the Pacific Ocean and to the north by the Strait of Juan de Fuca, where much of the coastline is dominated by steep sandstone cliffs that are continuously battered by the Pacific Ocean, in areas which receive about 110 inches of rain annually, Sitka spruce and western hemlock dominate steep, rugged forests and provide habitat for wildlife including black bear, elk, cougar, and the reintroduced Olympic fisher. The area also supports productive forestland and provides critical watershed for salmon habitat.



At top: A scenic view of Bohokus Peak. Above: Sandstone cliffs at Cape Flattery.

Timber management and fishing are important sources of income for the Makah Tribe, as well as important aspects of their cultural heritage. To better understand and manage their soil resources, the Makah Tribe agreed to have a new scientific soil survey of their Reservation

done by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The Makah Tribe and NRCS signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2007, and the field work was completed in 2009.

NRCS soil scientists and the Makah Cultural and Research Center worked together to identify culturally significant areas, using the utmost care and sensitivity. This collaborative effort

enabled the NRCS to accurately map the soils without impacting to these important areas.

The soils identified and mapped on the Makah Indian Reservation are surprisingly diverse, having developed on steep mountains,

rolling glacial plains, beaches, and river valleys. The high precipitation of the coastal climate contributed to the development of a unique suite of non-volcanic Andisols. These soils formed from a high degree of weathering



Camas is a native plant to many areas in Washington, especially South Puget Sound Prairies and Thurston County.

Spotlight on: Camas

Camas bulbs were an important staple for many Pacific Northwest tribes. The bulbs were harvested soon after flowering so they were not confused with death camas, which is toxic and potentially fatal, and has yellow flowers versus the blue flowers of true camas. The camas beds were so economically important that they could be bartered or inherited. The best camas beds were owned by extended families but controlled by individuals. The beds could be quite extensive, taking weeks to harvest. To increase production, the meadows were burned to control weeds, the soil was tilled, the best bulbs previously harvested were planted, and the fields were protected from intruders. Steaming the bulbs in large pits for 24 hours broke down inulin, a complex polysaccharide, into fructose, which made the bulbs sweet. Often, they were used to sweeten other foods.

(Balick 1999; Ray 1932; Teit 1928; Turner, Bouchard, and Kennedy 1980).

Continued on page 4



Northern Quest Resort and Casino, location of April's Tribal Advisory Council Meeting.

Tribal Advisory Council Meeting at Northern Quest

The 1st Tribal Advisory Council meeting of 2011 will meet on **April 18th at the Quest Resort and Casino**. The meeting will be in the "The Owner's Box" room. The meeting will start at 9:30 am and adjourn at approximately 2:30 pm.

Tentative Agenda:

1. Discuss governance structure of this Council by:
 - a) discussing bylaws;
 - b) electing Council officers;
 - c) deciding on dates of future meetings.
2. Update from Roylene Rides at the Door, State Conservationist
3. Discuss issues, concerns and priorities for short/long-term goals of this Council.
4. Decide future meeting dates and locations.
5. Other business

Some travel stipend may be available for Advisory Council members from ATNI. These details are still being worked out. Please contact Terri Parr with questions. E-mail: tparr@atntribes.org

Get Involved

Do you have a success story to share? Want to know more? Send submissions/questions to: rebecca.toupal@wa.usda.gov

www.wa.nrcs.gov



316 W. Boone Ave, Suite 450
Spokane, WA 99201-2348

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Articles continued

A MESSAGE FROM ROYLENE

Continued from page 1. Rebecca also has worked with private landowners, fishermen, recreationists, and conservation partnerships on natural resource issues.

Robin Slate has worked with Tribes since 1989 while in college at Oregon State University. She designed her educational career, Bachelor's in Natural Resources Management and Master's in Natural Resources Education, to work as a Tribal Liaison helping Tribes address environmental concerns.

Robin secured a position with the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, in the Salmon, Steelhead Habitat Inventory and Assessment program. In the role of Habitat Biologist, Robin became familiar with several western Washington Tribes and many of their environmental concerns.

Over the next few months Rebecca and Robin will be contacting you to set up a meeting with you to introduce themselves and our agency. *-Roylene*

TWENTY-THREE MILE CREEK

Continued from page 2. Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP). The Department was successful in leveraging WHIP and BPA funds to develop a long-term management plan for the drainage. District Conservationist Patrice Beckwith, working in our Republic Service Center says "the

conservation practices included in the plan will greatly improve conditions in meadows, along stream banks, and consequently, in the creek itself." Some plantings have been done along the creek, and almost 4,000 feet of exclusion fence for approximately 20 acres of wet meadow is planned for construction during the summer of 2011.

This project complements another WHIP project completed in 2007 that addressed the same resource issues and objectives on 17.5 acres downstream of this site. The project included water gaps, hardened crossings for livestock access, and exclusion fences. The exclusion of cattle is particularly important to the timing of the trout's life cycle. Red-band trout spawn from late April through mid-June and the fry (young fish) typically emerge from the gravel in mid-July. This happens to be the same time-frame for cattle grazing in and around the mountain streams.

MAKAH SOIL SURVEY

Continued from page 3. rather than from volcanic ash, and have high amounts of organic matter and relatively high acidity and support the growth of some of the largest and oldest trees in North America.

The updated soil survey, scheduled to be delivered in 2011, will provide the Makah Tribe with vital knowledge about their soil resources, and assist the NRCS with implementation of conservation programs on the Makah Indian Reservation.